

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOULDEN PARISH COUNCIL

held on Thursday 4th December 2025 at 6.00pm in Foulden Village Hall

Present: Cllrs C Balding, J Green, S McMahon, S Parker (chair), N West

Minutes: Mrs Sharon Sweet

6 members of the public and District Councillor S Hussey were in attendance.

1. To consider apologies for absence

Apologies from Cllr B Pye and Cllr B Parnham.

It was **AGREED** to approve an extension of absence for Cllr B Parnham until February 6th 2026.

2. To receive Declaration of Interests and any requests for dispensation

Cllr J Green reminded the meeting of his trusteeship of the village hall.

3. To agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th October 2025.

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th October 2025 were **AGREED** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Public Forum — for members of the public to comment on agenda items, and to receive updates from District and County Councillors

- A resident queried the position regarding recycling credits and referred to discussions at previous meetings about the possibility of allocating a portion of money the council receives from these to the village hall.
- The District Councillor gave a verbal report including an update on Local Government Reform and the postponement of the Norfolk and Suffolk Mayor elections. No confirmation has yet been received regarding the County Council elections in May 2026.

5. To agree dates for 2026 meetings

The Parish Council meeting dates for 2026 were **AGREED** as: 5th Feb; 7th May; 2nd July; 3rd Sept; 5th Nov, all commencing at 6pm. The Annual Parish Meeting was **AGREED** as 9th April, commencing 7pm. All meetings held at Foulden Village Hall.

6. Noticeboards.

6.1 Cllr West provided an update on the proposal for the Council to obtain two new aluminium noticeboards, to be funded through donations from four local businesses. It was **AGREED** to proceed with the 2 noticeboards and accept the donations, with the contribution set at £380 per business. It was noted that the intention is for the noticeboards not to be locked and to be used as community noticeboards. Once the first noticeboard is received, Cllr West will investigate whether this is possible without invalidating the warranty. **ACTION:** Clerk to contact the four local businesses to request the £380 donations and to make the necessary arrangements for payment.

6.2 The meeting noted that a donation pledge had been received from the Highways Surveyors Allotment Charity to fund the Parish Council noticeboard. It was noted that, at the time of issuing the agenda, the noticeboard had already been ordered. Cllr West updated the meeting that the noticeboard was due to have shipped on the previous Monday and that the Council is currently awaiting the courier's delivery update.

7. Website.

It was noted that from 2025–26 the annual audit will require Councils to use an authority-owned email domain. Members considered migrating the Council's website and email hosting to RLS Computer Services, noting the benefits of direct payment of hosting costs, ongoing compliance with accessibility and legislation, and IT support to the Proper Officer. It was **AGREED** to proceed with the migration to RLS within the current financial year. The quotation from RLS (excl. VAT) was noted as: £190 for the .gov.uk domain and emails for the Clerk and Councillors, £290 for website migration, and £190 annual website hosting.

ACTION: Clerk to progress the migration with RLS Computer Services.

8. Finance

8.1 The Council received and discussed the draft budget. Two amendments were agreed:

- Reduce the Defibrillator budget line by £300 (as the existing model has a combined battery and pads, which are cheaper to replace).
- Add a new budget line for the Village Hall, allocating all recycling credits to it (estimated £300).

Subject to these amendments, it was **AGREED** to set the 2026–27 budget at £27,262.00 and the precept at £26,932.00.

With a Tax Base of 158.3, this equates to £170.13 per annum for a Band D equivalent property, an increase of £98.00 per annum (approximately £1.88 per week).

It was noted that Breckland District Council has agreed that the precept will be paid in a single instalment in April 2026 to ensure adequate cash flow.

ACTION: Clerk to draft and publish a notice to inform residents.

8.2 The Asset Register was reviewed and it was **AGREED** to add the new noticeboard once installed.

8.3 It was noted the VAT claim back for 01.04.2025 to 30.09.2025 of £2,180.98 had been received on 9th October

8.4 The payments as per annex A were **AGREED**, and receipt noted in 8.3. It was further noted that the monthly bank charge from Unity Bank would be increasing from £6 to £7pm with effect from February 2026.

8.5 Bank balances as at 24th November 2025 were noted as: Current acc £3,739.91 and Instant Access acc £4,601.65

8.6 The quotation for Scribe account software was considered at a cost of £100 onboarding and £24/month. This quotation included a discount of £99.00. **DEFERRED**.

8.7 It was **AGREED** to appoint Sonya Blythe as the internal auditor for 2025-26, at a cost of £130.00

8.8 It was noted the clerk has one set of adult defibrillator pads on back order. It was **AGREED** to order a set of pediatric pads.

9. Planning

9.1 To consider any applications received from Breckland District Council as consultee and note any responses sent between meetings: none

9.2 To note any decisions received from Breckland District Council: none

9.3 It was noted the public consultation is now taking place for the Breckland DC Local

Plan. This closes Monday 15th December 2025.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Previously circulated email regarding Norfolk County Council's consultation on the Norfolk Local Government Future was noted.

10.2 It was noted Breckland District Council had confirmed by email that the Recreation Ground bin had now been added to the bin emptying schedule.

11. Highways Matters.

11.1 Cllr West updated the meeting that permission had been refused by Highways for a flashing "deer" speed awareness sign. It was noted that a quotation was not yet available for a "flip" deer sign. It was **AGREED** that the Highways Engineer would attend site with Cllr West and/or Cllr McMahon to investigate possible measures to reduce vehicle speeds on the Foulden to Diddlington road.

11.2 Approval was noted for the siting of a waste bin at the junction of White Hart Street and School Road (*what3words: depend/solutions/stooping*). It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will arrange the ordering of the bin, coordinate the installation with Cllr West and the emptying arrangements with Breckland DC. The bin is to be installed in the same manner as the recreation ground bin installed earlier in the year.

11.3 Public Rights of Way (Definitive Map updates) - Cllr McMahon advised that he has been in contact with the NCC Rights of Way Officer regarding two submissions relating to Foulden. An update on status and timescales was requested; however, it was noted that there is a significant backlog of approximately 5–6 years of outstanding work. Cllr McMahon to continue to follow up with NCC.

11.4 Talon End Footbridge - It was noted that Norfolk County Council will replace the footbridge on a 'without prejudice' basis in the current location. NCC intends to review the Definitive Map in the New Year to confirm the correct location. Matter closed.

12. Public Forum

- A resident asked for clarification of the discussion under item 11.4 (Talon End Footbridge) regarding whether and when Highways will be repairing the footbridge
- A resident raised concerns about speeding vehicles, noting that this had also been a concern raised by several residents at a recent village coffee morning.
- A further resident offered assistance in relation to local footpaths, in connection with item 11.3.

13. To receive items for the next agenda: none

It was RESOLVED under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the signing of the Locum Clerks temporary contract as per the terms agreed at the meeting of 30th October 2025, item 14 (b) on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information

The chairman signed the temporary locum contract for Mrs S Hunt

Meeting closed: 7.30pm

Annex A

Greenbarnes – Noticeboard & posts	£889.68
Unity Bank monthly fee DDR	£ 6.00*
S Hunt and HMRC - November	£612.04
S Sweet – budget training	£ 50.00
S Hunt and HMRC – Dec & Jan	£tbc
Royal British Legion - wreath	£ 20.00 (S137)
Mrs Sarah Hunt - refund Defibrillator Pads	£124.80 (on back order)
Fields in Trust – playground inspection	£127.80
G Fendick Landscaping – Oct	£312.00
Cozens – streetlighting maintenance	£ 44.40
Foulden Village Hall (Hire 20 th Nov)	£ 17.50

*Unity Bank monthly charge increasing to £7 pm with effect from Feb 2026